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(54) Abstract Title  
A garment hanger

(57) A clothes hanger comprises a hook 3; a garment mounting structure 1; and coupling means 2 which embrace and hold together the hook and garment mounting structure. The coupling means consists of two disks (21,22 fig. 2C) which sit on opposite sides of the garment mounting structure. Posts (212, fig 3C) from one disk pass through apertures in the garment mounting structure and are received by receptacles (222, fig. 4C) on the complementary disk which also has a vertical channel (226, fig. 4C) for receiving the stem of the hook. The outside surface of the disks may be used for labelling.

§. 4 w.s. Absatz

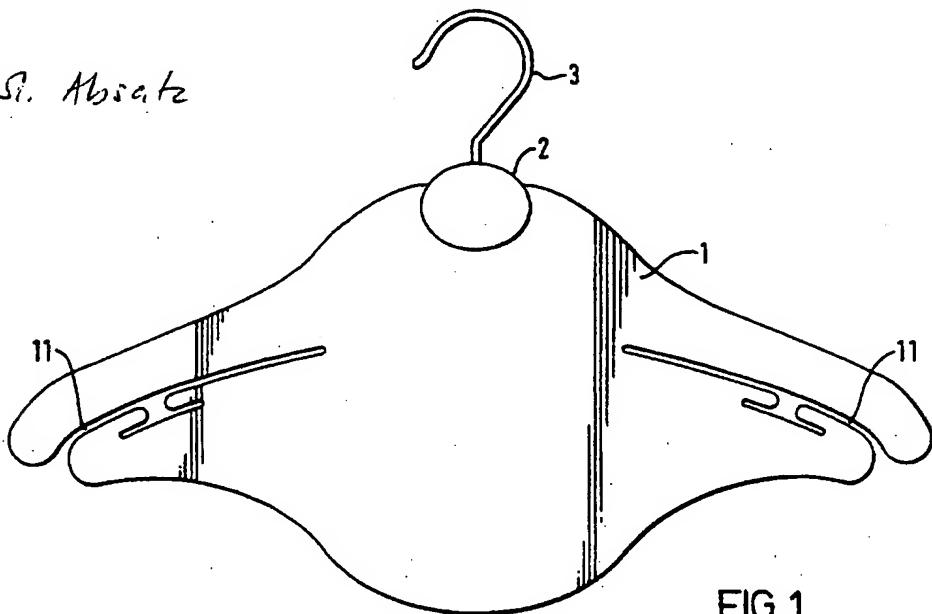


FIG.1

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At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

The claims were filed later than the filing date within the period prescribed by Rule 25(1) of the Patents Rules 1995

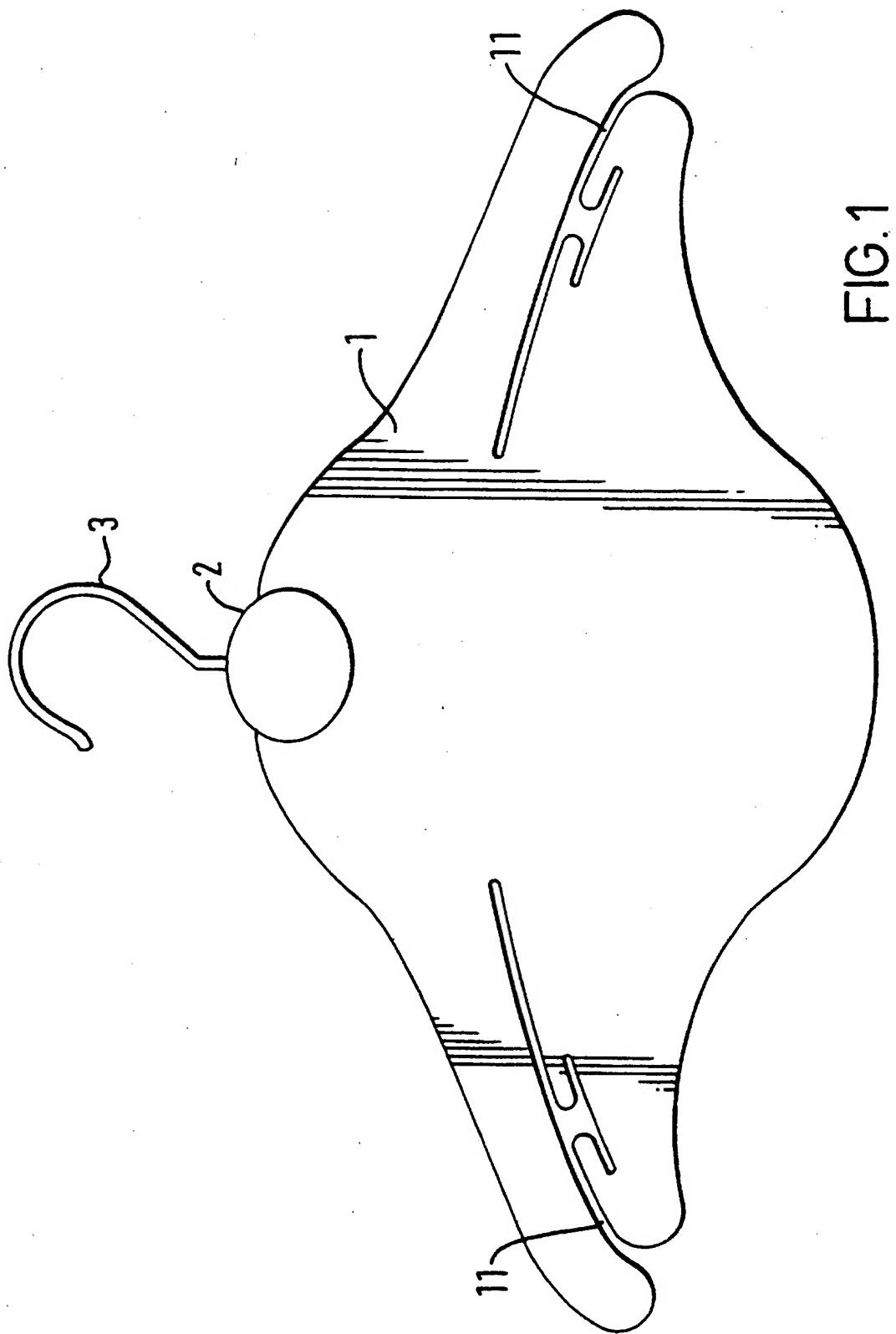


FIG. 1

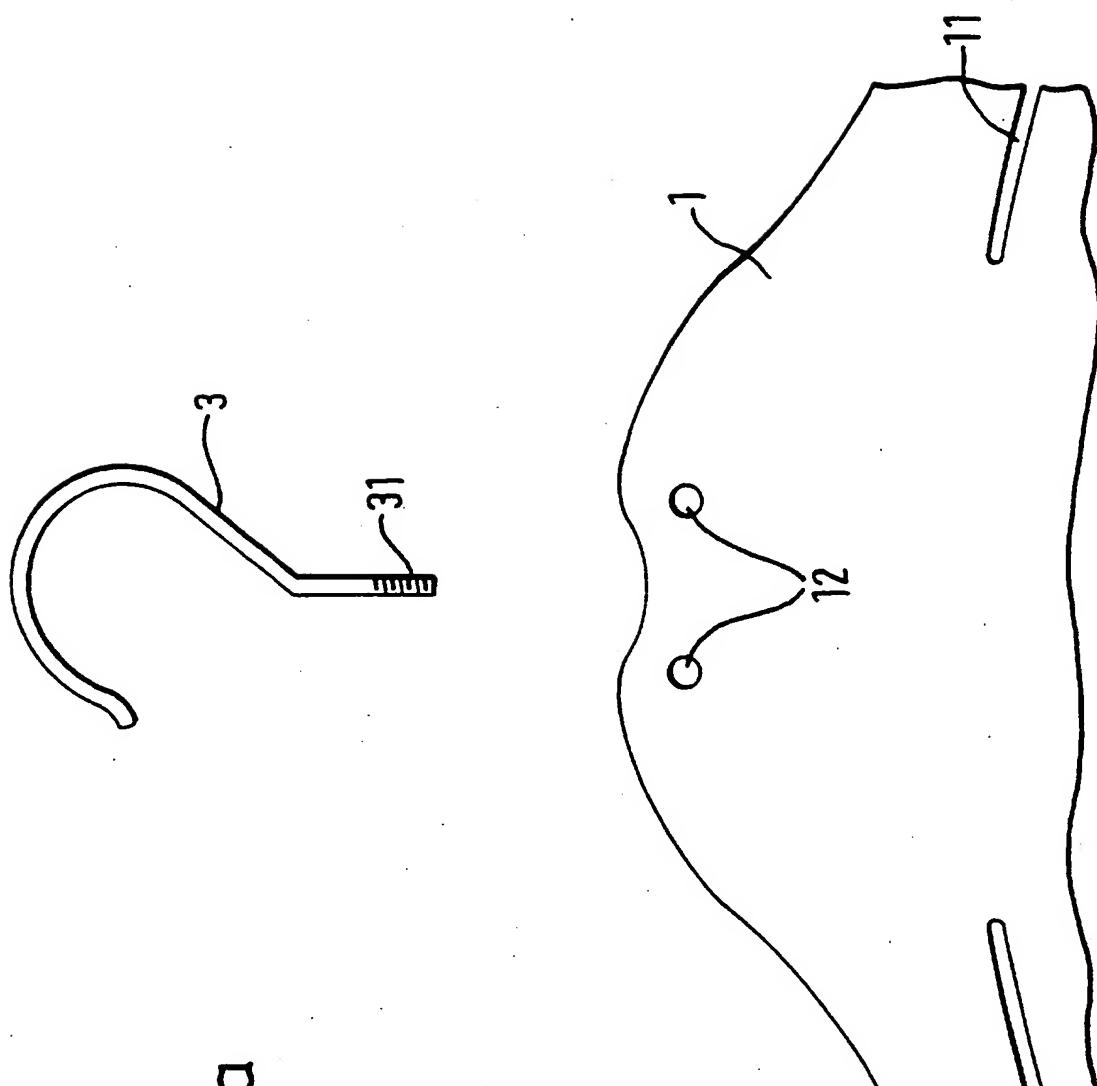


FIG. 1a

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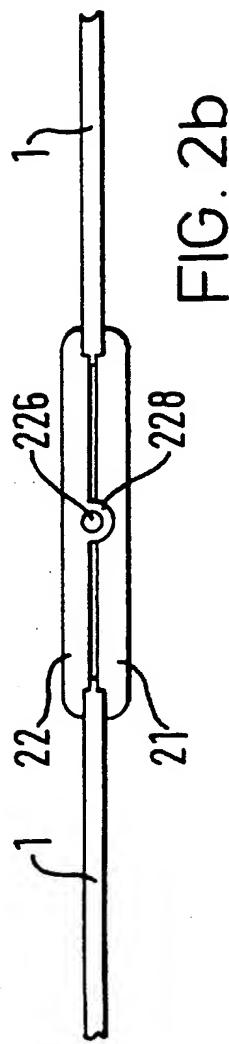
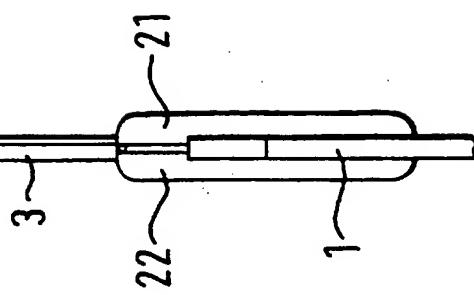
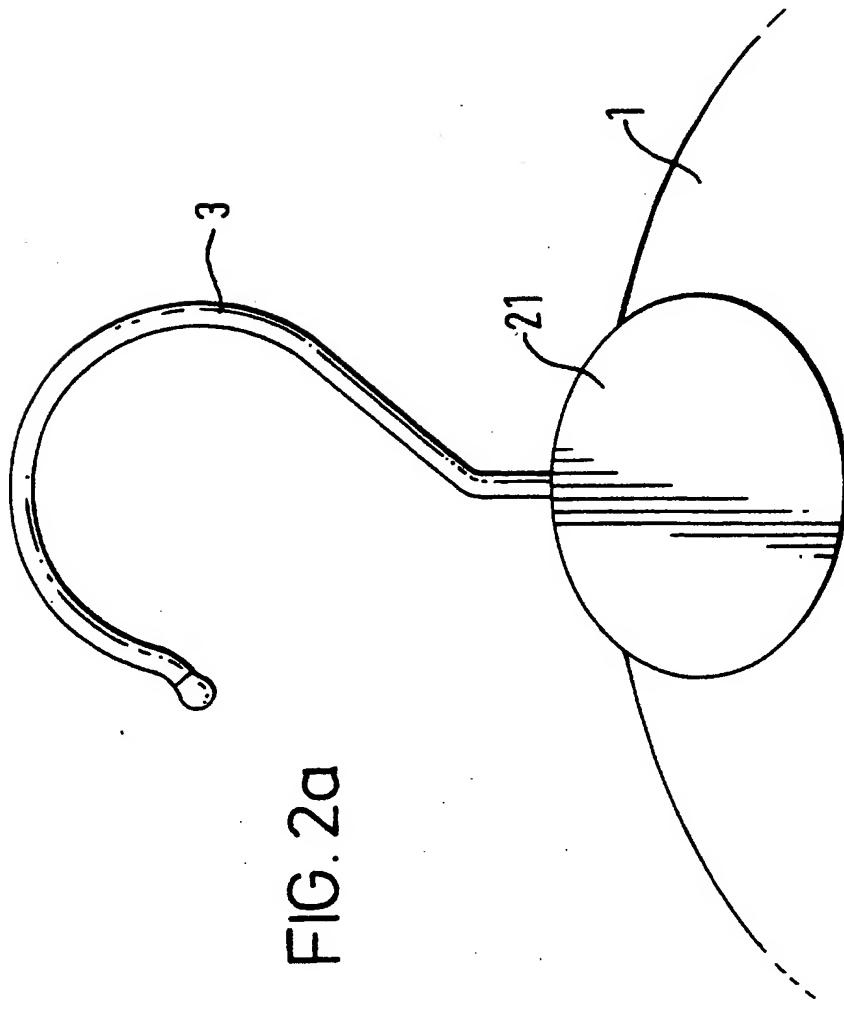


FIG. 2a



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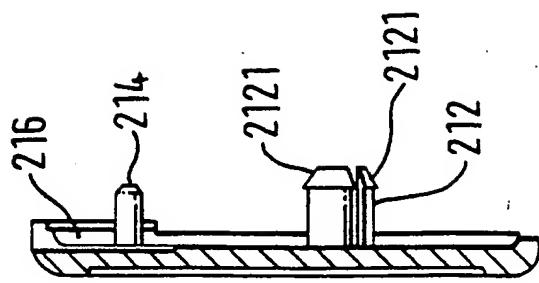


FIG. 3b

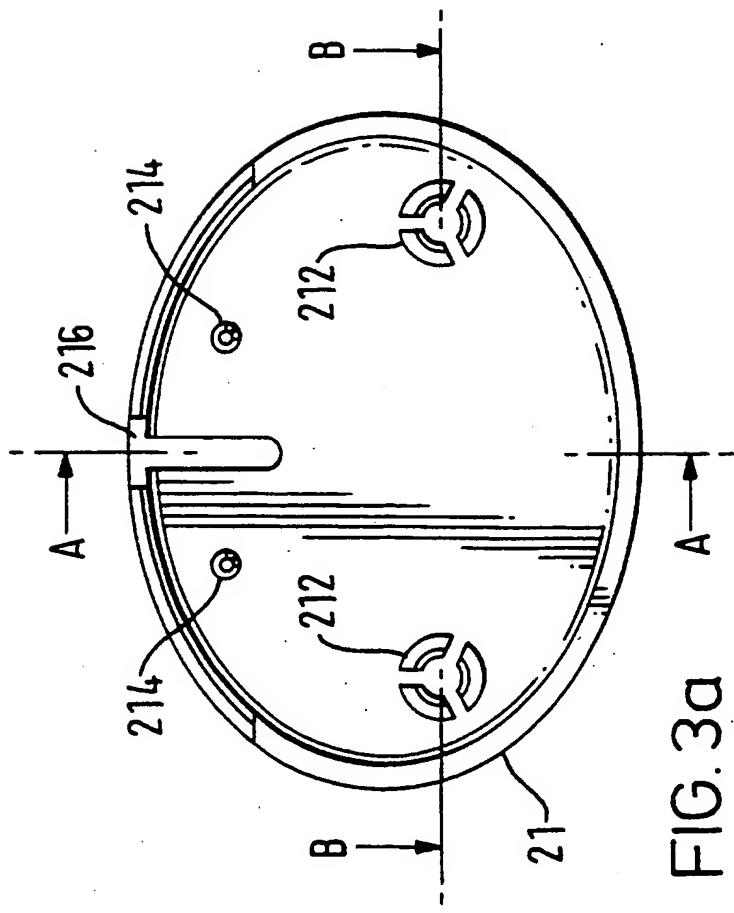


FIG. 3a

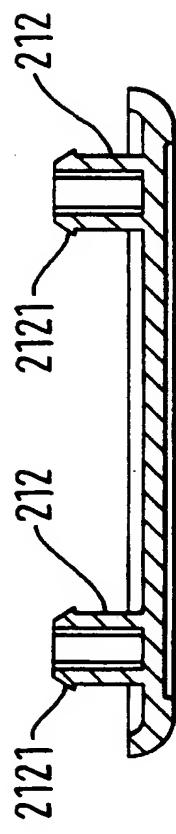


FIG. 3c

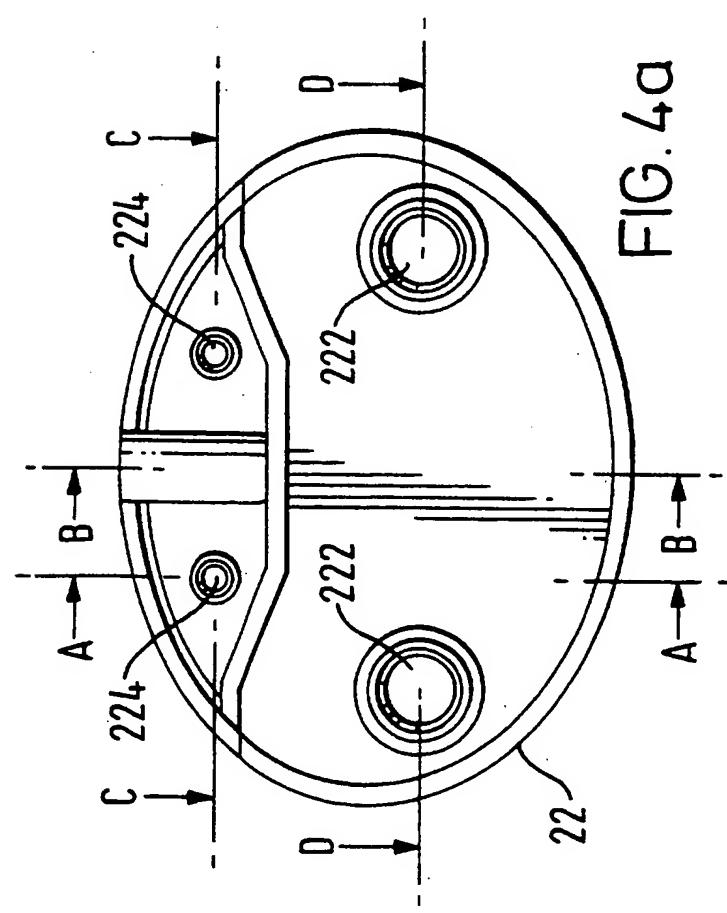


FIG. 4a

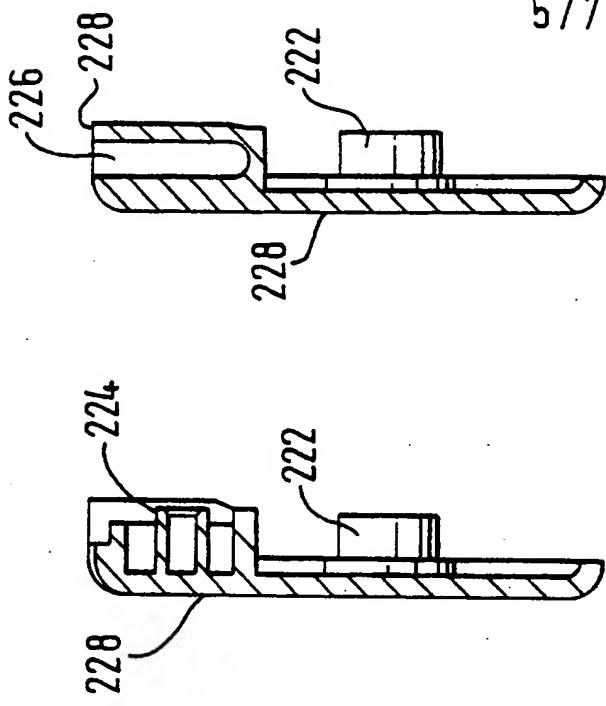


FIG. 4b

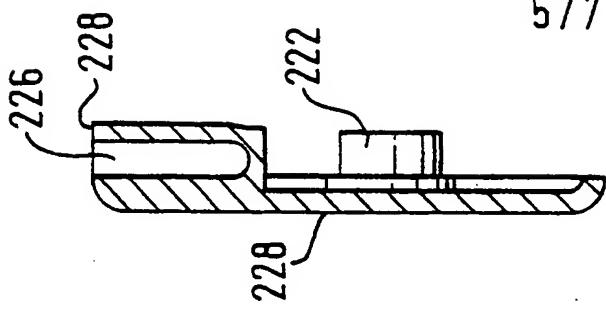


FIG. 4c

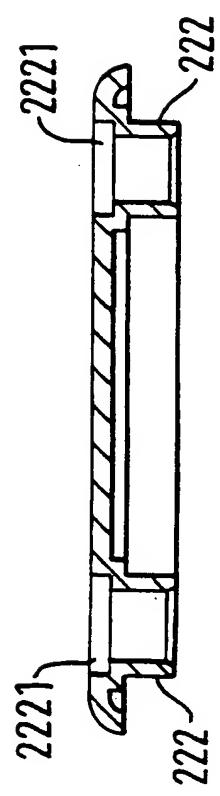


FIG. 4d

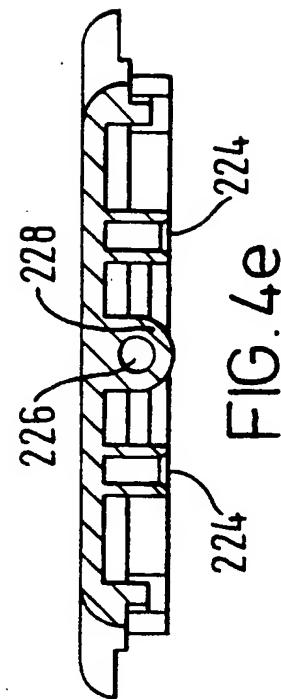


FIG. 4e

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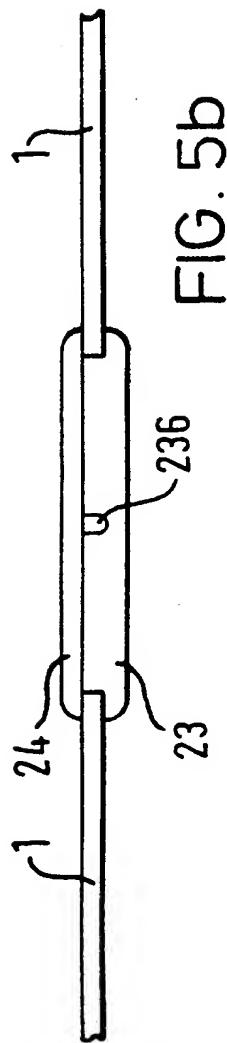
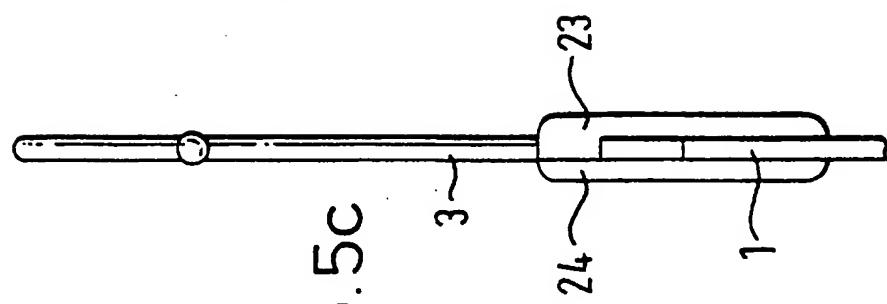
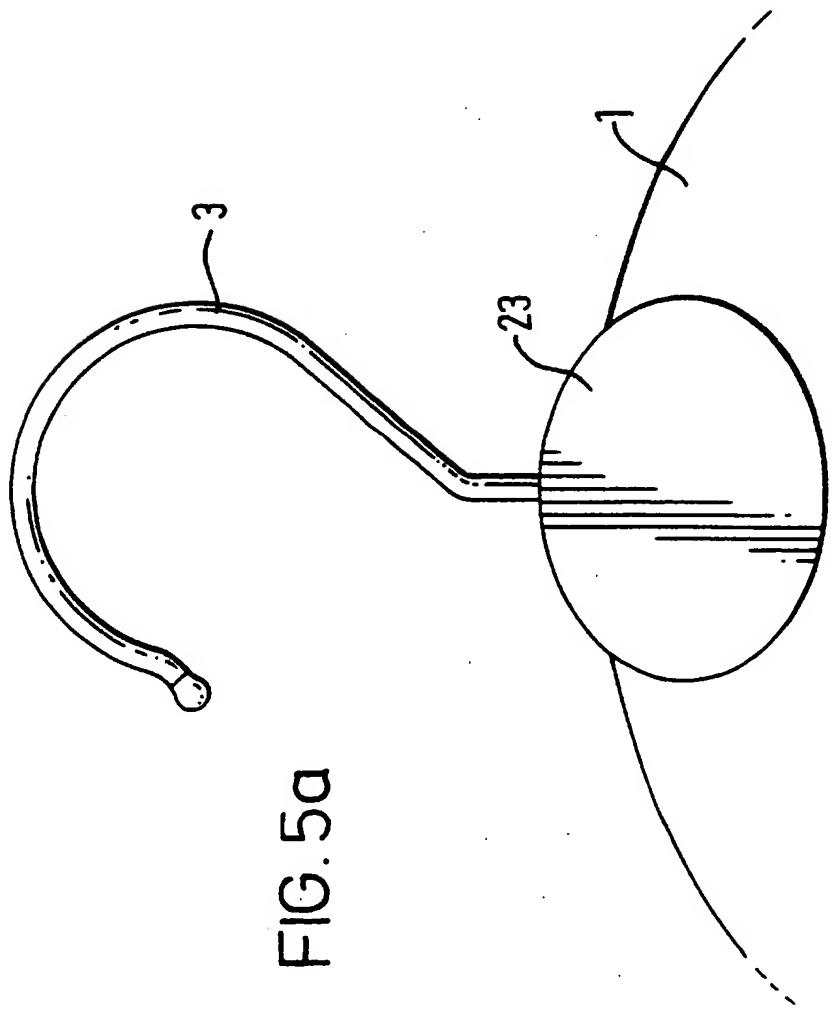


FIG. 5a



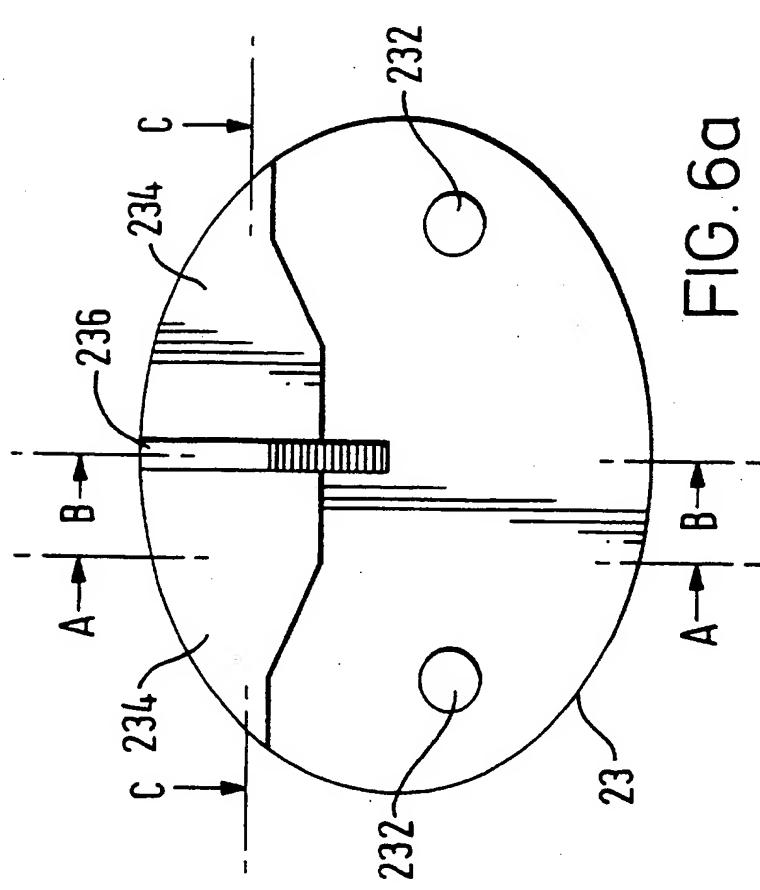


FIG. 6a

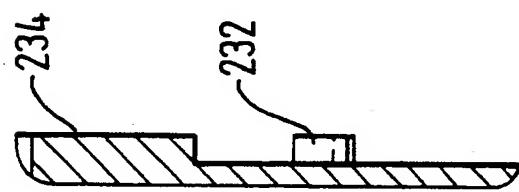


FIG. 6b

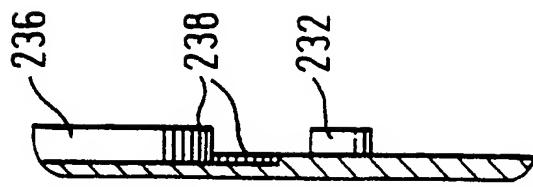


FIG. 6c



FIG. 6d

GARMENT HANGER

This invention relates to a garment hanger.

Garment hangers are used to suspend items of clothing for distribution, storage and display. Typically, a conventional garment hanger comprises a hook or other means of suspension, and a frame, on which the garment to be displayed is draped or wrapped. The materials from which such hangers are made are typically metal, wood or plastic.

Ideally, a garment hanger should be made in a shape which fits as closely as possible the contours of the garment which is to be hung. This is especially important for display of garments in retail outlets. The appearance of a garment on the racks is thought to be an important factor in whether a customer decides to buy a particular garment or not. However, the process of commissioning a design for the garment hanger, designing and making a mould and casting the garment hangers can be very expensive and time consuming. For this reason, making custom designed hangers is only economically justified for garments expected to be on the market for long period of time. For "short run" garments, the only alternative is to use generic hangers.

This invention provides for a garment hanger which is both cheap and easy to manufacture, and is therefore suitable in particular for short run garments.

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, we provide a garment hanger comprising structure for mounting a garment thereon; a hook or like means for suspending the garment hanger with a garment mounted thereon; and a coupling means which embraces and holds together the hook and the garment mounting structure.

The garment mounting structure may comprise a cardboard or plastics former, and be cut into any shape required. The coupling means may comprise a plaque, the surface of which may display size, trademark or other information. The former presents a surface area adapted for marketing or sales information. It could show a picture illustrating how the garment may appear upon a wearer in use. Suitably the hook is a metal hook and is enabled to swivel about its axis in the

coupling means.

Embodiments of the present invention will now be described by way of examples only and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGURE 1 is a view of a garment hanger showing the hanger as assembled;

FIGURE 1a is a view of the garment hanger of Figure 1, with the plaque removed, showing the hook and the garment mounting board;

FIGURE 2a is a plan view, FIGURE 2b a top view, and FIGURE 2c a side view of part of an assembled hanger, showing the first version of the plaque, the hook and the garment mounting board;

FIGURE 3a is a plan view of the inner face of a first disc member of one version of the plaque;

FIGURE 3b and FIGURE 3c are respective sectional views along lines A-A and B-B of the first disc member of Figure 3a;

FIGURE 4a is a plan view of a second disc member of the plaque, which mates with the first disc member of Figure 3;

FIGURE 4b, FIGURE 4c, FIGURE 4d and FIGURE 4e are respective sectional views along lines A-A, B-B, C-C and D-D of the second disc member of Figure 4a;

FIGURE 5a is a plan view, FIGURE 5b a top view, and FIGURE 5c a side view of part of the assembled hanger, showing an alternative plaque, the hook and the garment mounting board;

FIGURE 6a is a plan view of the inner face of a first disc member of an alternative plaque shown in Figures 5a, 5b and 5c; and

FIGURE 6b, FIGURE 6c and FIGURE 6d are respective sectional views along lines A-A, B-B and C-C of the first disc member of Figure 6a.

Referring to the drawings, there is shown in Figure 1 a garment hanger made of a garment mounting board 1, a hook 3 and a plaque 2, which holds together the hook and the garment mounting board. In Figure 1a, the hook 3 and garment mounting board 1 are shown with the plaque removed.

The hook 3 is a conventional hook of the type used for garment hangers and is preferably made of metal, though other

materials may be used. The garment is draped over the garment mounting board 1, which is a piece of rigid material shaped to fit the shape of the garment. The board may have cut out areas 11, into which excess material from a garment draped on the hanger can be tucked. One or more positioning holes 12 are cut out of the garment mounting board near its top end.

The garment mounting board 1 can be made out of cardboard, plywood, plastics or even wood or other materials. All that is required is for the material to be relatively stiff and inflexible, so that the garment mounting board does not collapse under the weight of the garment draped upon it. Needless to say, the board may have other shapes besides that illustrated in Figure 1. Furthermore, the garment mounting board may be generally flat or it may be contoured. In the latter case, the garment mounting board may be made of plastics material by, for example, injection moulding or vacuum forming. The surface of the board may be used to display marketing or other information.

The plaque 2 sits between the hook 3 and the garment mounting board 1, and holds these two parts together. The plaque is generally flat, and may be in a round or oval shape. The two faces of the plaque can conveniently be used to display information, such as the name and size of the garment, the name of the store, trade marks or other marketing information. Display of such information on the plaque allows the use of swing tickets to be dispensed with, with a consequential saving in expense.

Figures 2a-c show a close up of a hanger made with one type of plaque. In this embodiment, the two individual discs 21 and 22 which make up the plaque have complementary posts and receptacles, which allow the discs to mate with each other across the garment mounting board 1. The garment mounting board 1 is thus gripped in between the discs 21 and 22, while the hook 3 is held in place by means of channel 226.

Figures 3a-c show close up views of a disc 21. Disc 21 is a generally flat disc, preferably made of thermoset plastic, although it may also be made out of other suitable materials. Posts 212 and 214 protrude from the inner face of the disc 21, and are deformable so that they may be inserted into

corresponding receptacles on a complementary disc. Each post 212 is a hollow cylinder split into three portions longitudinally, each portion having a semi-circular cross-section (Figure 3a). A skirt 2121 projects radially outwardly at the distal end of each post (Figure 3b). Posts 212 are thus easily deformable for insertion into corresponding receptacles, and are retained in this position by means of the projecting skirt 2121.

The complementary disc 22 which mates with disc 21 is shown in Figures 4a-e. Disc 22 has generally the same shape and size as disc 21. A channel 226 is formed on protrusion 228 at the upper side of disc 22. The channel 226 receives the stalk of hook 3 when the hanger is assembled, the diameter of the channel being approximately the same as the diameter of the stalk of hook 3. Protrusion 228 on disc 22 is received in groove 216 on disc 21. The receptacles 222 and 224 are hollow cylinders projecting from the face of disc 22, and are situated to correspond to the positions of posts 212 and 214 respectively of disc 21. The inner diameters of receptacles 224 are approximately the same as, or slightly smaller than, the diameters of posts 214 on disc 21, so that posts 214 can be easily inserted into receptacles 224. Receptacles 222 are similarly dimensioned so that they can receive posts 212 on disc 21. Holes 2221 are cut out from the face of the disc 22 behind posts 22, to receive the projecting skirts 2121 on posts 212 of disc 21.

During assembly of the garment hanger, the disc 21 is positioned on the garment mounting board 1 by means of the holes 12 on the board, into which the posts 212 of disc 21 are inserted. The distal ends of the posts 212 protrude beyond the other side of the garment mounting board, and are inserted into receptacles 222 of disc 22. The engagement of the posts and receptacles sandwiches board 1 between the two discs 21 and 22. Adhesive may also be applied between the board and a disc or between the discs to further strengthen the hold. The stalk of a hook 3 is inserted into channel 226 formed in disc 22, and held in place by means of threads 31, or by adhesive, or both.

Figures 5a-c show an alternative embodiment of the plaque 2, in which the component discs 23 and 24 do not mate with each

other, but rather are held together by means of adhesive applied to the inner faces of the discs. As in the first embodiment, the garment mounting board 1 is sandwiched between the discs, and the hook is held in place by means of a channel 236 formed in disc 23.

In this embodiment, disc 24 is simply a disc of plastic or other material, having a generally flat inner surface. Disc 23, on the other hand, has a raised portion 234 and posts 232, as shown in Figures 6a-d. Unlike the posts in the first embodiment of the plaque, posts 232 of disc 23 are solid and not hollow. The height of posts 232 and the height of the raised portion 234 are approximately the same as the thickness of the board 1, so that when the posts 232 are placed into the positioning holes 12, the reverse side of the board is generally flat, with no protrusions. Thus, unlike in the first embodiment, the distal end of posts 232 are flush against the reverse surface of the board. The disc 24 can be simply glued in place onto the board 1 and the disc 23. Disc 23 has a channel 236, as seen in Figure 6a. The lower end of the channel is threaded, so as to provide a grip with the threads 31 at the distal end of the stalk of the hook.

Since the garment mounting board of this hanger can be made of inexpensive yet durable materials, production costs are reduced to a minimum. The garment mounting board can be cut from material using simple machining tools, and without the need for making moulds as is the case for some conventional hangers. The hook and the discs making up the plaque can be recycled and used in the assembly of other hangers. Therefore, the garment hanger described here can be made cheaply, quickly and easily. It is thus suitable especially for "short run" garments. It may even be possible to provide the hanger as part of the packaging of a garment, so that the garment is sold together with the hanger. A further advantage of the hanger described here is that it is relatively slim, and can be packaged easily. Therefore a good stock density can be achieved.

The garment mounting board provides a substantial flat surface which can be printed with marketing or sales information,

something not possible with conventional plastics or wooden hangers. It may include an illustration showing how the garment will appear upon a wearer in use. This avoids the need for additional swing tabs, labels or inserts, reducing the overall costs for garment presentation for sale. That a conventional metal hook is employed which can swivel in the coupling means provided by the plaque is an important feature in use of the hanger, in handling and in placing garments on a rail or other support. Attempts have previously been made to provide composite hangers with a clip-on plastics hook which could not swivel because of its construction and mounting. The hook tends to snap in use as garments can only be hung with the axis of a garment hanging rail essentially perpendicular to the main plane of the hanger. With a swivelable hook, the hanger may be mounted on the rail at any angle without damage.

CLAIMS

1. A garment hanger comprising a structure for mounting a garment thereon; a hook or like means for suspending the garment hanger with a garment mounted thereon; and a coupling means which embraces and holds together the hook and the garment mounting structure.
2. A garment hanger according to Claim 1, wherein the garment mounting structure comprises a cardboard or wooden former cut to shape or a plastics former cut or moulded to shape.
3. A garment hanger according to Claim 2, wherein the former comprises cardboard printed with marketing or sales material or with a picture illustrating appears upon a wearer in use.
4. A garment hanger according to any preceding claim, wherein the coupling means comprises a plaque, the surface of which is adapted to display size, Trade Mark or other indicia.
5. A garment hanger according to any preceding claim, wherein the hook comprises a metal hook enabled to swivel about its axis within the coupling means.
6. A garment hanger according to Claim 2, or any claim appendant thereto, wherein the former is provided with one or more positioning holes for cooperation with the coupling means, and wherein the coupling means is provide with one or more posts adapted to extend into the positioning holes.
7. A garment hanger according to Claim 2, or any claim appendant thereto, wherein the former is provided with one or more positioning holes for cooperation with the coupling means, and wherein the coupling means is provide with one or more cooperating complementary posts and receptacles with which the

post(s) is(are) adapted to mate.

8. A garment hanger according to any preceding claim, wherein adhesive is present between the coupling means and the former to hold or to assist in holding the two together.

9. A garment hanger substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as shown in the accompanying drawings.

10. A kit of parts for forming a garment hanger, the kit comprising a hook or like means for suspending a garment hanger with a garment mounted thereon, one or more structures each adapted for mounting a particular garment thereon, and a coupling means adapted to embrace and to hold together the hook and a selected garment mounting structure.



The  
Patent  
Office  
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Application No: GB 9717477.5  
Claims searched: 1-10

Examiner: Emma Leland  
Date of search: 4 December 1998

**Patents Act 1977**  
**Search Report under Section 17**

**Databases searched:**

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK Cl (Ed.P): A4L (L121)

Int Cl (Ed.6): A47G (25/14 25/32 25/36 25/38 25/40)

Other: Online : WPI

**Documents considered to be relevant:**

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage		Relevant to claims
X	GB 760280	Baschnonga - figs. 1&4; page 1 lines 56-58	1
A	GB 129565	Glassberg - figs. 1-3; page 2, lines 10-20	1
X	WO 96/36262	Barlow - figs. 5&6	1,4&10
X	US 4221298	Wright - fig. 1; col. 4, lines 4-22	1,5&10
X	JP 09289941	Yoshida - figs. 1-6	1,5&10

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.